

# CHS CHECKUP



A publication by and for employees of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services

March 19, 2001

## NEWS BRIEFS

### CHS WEBSITE A HIT

The CHS website is off to a great start.

During February, more than 65,000 CHS web pages were viewed, compared to nearly 51,000 during January.

Employees are encouraged to use the site at <http://chs.state.ky.us/> to learn more about Cabinet news and programs.

The latest addition to the website is a job posting link. Go to the Cabinet Info button and then look for "Job Openings" in the upper right hand portion of the page.



TIP OF  
THE  
WEEK

We all know that we should brush out teeth at least twice a day, but studies show that most people don't brush nearly long enough. Researchers say that the average tooth-brushing session lasts a mere 10 to 12 seconds, which isn't enough time to get your teeth and mouth clean. Ideally, you should brush for a full 3 minutes—about as long as the average CD tract—twice a day. So, for healthier teeth, turn on the tunes—and brush along to your favorite song.

## A Message To Employees From Interim Secretary Marcia Morgan

*(Marcia Morgan was named Interim Secretary effective March 16)*

These last few weeks have not been easy ones for the employees of the Cabinet for Health Services.

Budget problems in Medicaid which have consumed our attention, sudden changes in Cabinet leadership, and the creation of an Executive Steering Committee on Medicaid by Governor Paul Patton have altered our normal way of doing business.

I recognize that uncertainty is the prevailing attitude among our employees. As interim secretary of Health Services, my priority is to work with you to bring about a sense of stability and momentum to the Cabinet.

Change can be unsettling, and sometimes even demoralizing. But what must carry us through is the belief that the work we do is important.

Our programs are a lifeline for some people. Whether we send a check, make a visit or provide a service, we make a difference in people's lives.

With that in mind, I hope we can come together and work cooperatively to accomplish the tasks that are before us.

I know that the Medicaid budget has dominated the work of many, and that there are other issues of equal importance in this Cabinet that require attention. I am meeting

with department leaders to address those issues quickly.

I need your help and I want your input.

I will be visiting throughout the Cabinet and, when I come to your area, I ask that you tell me about your concerns and give me your suggestions for reinvigorating the spirit of our employees. If you want to communicate with me before I visit your area, please send an e-mail message to my secretary, Susan Bryant.

We are also in the process of creating a strategic plan, which will guide the work of the Health Services Cabinet. Representatives of all offices and departments are involved and will be asking for feedback from their colleagues on the specifics of the plan. Please give them your opinions.

This strategic plan will be aligned with our budget request; so if an activity isn't in the plan, it won't be funded.

Again, I ask for your support for the work we do, your participation in planning for the future, and, personally, for your assistance in creating momentum in the Cabinet.

I echo former Secretary Jimmy Helton's comment that the employees of the Cabinet for Health Services are among the best employees in state government. I sincerely thank you for your commitment and your hard work!



### New Stamp Issued On Diabetes Awareness

The U.S. Postal Service has issued a new stamp to draw attention to diabetes awareness. The stamp's debut is timely and its message relevant as the American Diabetes Association prepares for its upcoming annual American Diabetes Alert Day on March 27.

The American Diabetes Alert is a one-day "wake-up" call to identify the nearly six million Americans who have diabetes and don't know it. The cornerstone of the Alert is a simple, seven-question paper and pencil risk test, which helps people determine whether or not they are at risk for developing diabetes.

Among the primary risk factors for diabetes are being overweight, underactive, over the age of 45 and having a family history of diabetes. African Americans, Hispanics and



Native Americans are at an increased risk, as are women

who have had babies weighing more than nine pounds at birth.

In Kentucky, an estimated 89,300 people have diabetes and don't know it.

Illustrated by artist James

Steinberg, and designed by Richard Sheaff, the Diabetes Awareness stamp includes two elements associated with diabetes testing and research: a microscope and a test tube containing blood. Featuring the phrase, "Know More About Diabetes," the design conveys the importance of diabetes awareness and early detection of the disease.

For more information on diabetes, call the American Diabetes Association Kentucky chapter at 1-888-342-2383 or visit the Association's website at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).



### Employees Honored For Newborn Hearing Screening

Two employees of the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs have been honored for their work in implementing universal newborn hearing screening in the state.

The honors were presented by the Kentucky Speech & Hearing Association during its annual meeting March 8-10 in Lexington.

Michelle King, an audiologist and program director of Kentucky Infants' Sound Start for the commission, received the American Speech-Language & Hearing Foundation Outstanding Clinical Achievement award. This award is given to a speech-language pathologist or audiologist in Kentucky who has made an outstanding recent contribution to the field.

Mrs. King was honored for her contribution in implementing newborn hearing screening, which is part of the KIDS NOW initiative. Mrs. King will be Kentucky's nominee for ASHF DiCarlo award, which recognizes recent outstanding clinical achievement nationally.

Also honored was Ann Marks, currently serving as Deputy Secretary for Health Services. She received a certificate of appreciation for her efforts on behalf on the newborn hearing screening program during her tenure as executive director of the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs. The certificates are awarded to individuals outside speech and hearing professions whose work supports KSHA's goals.

The Kentucky Infants' Sound Start program has assisted in placing testing equipment in all birthing hospitals.



Michelle King (left), program administrator for the Kentucky Infants' Sound Start newborn screening program, and former Miss America Heather Whitestone. Whitestone was the keynote speaker at the Kentucky Speech-Language Hearing Association conference in Lexington.